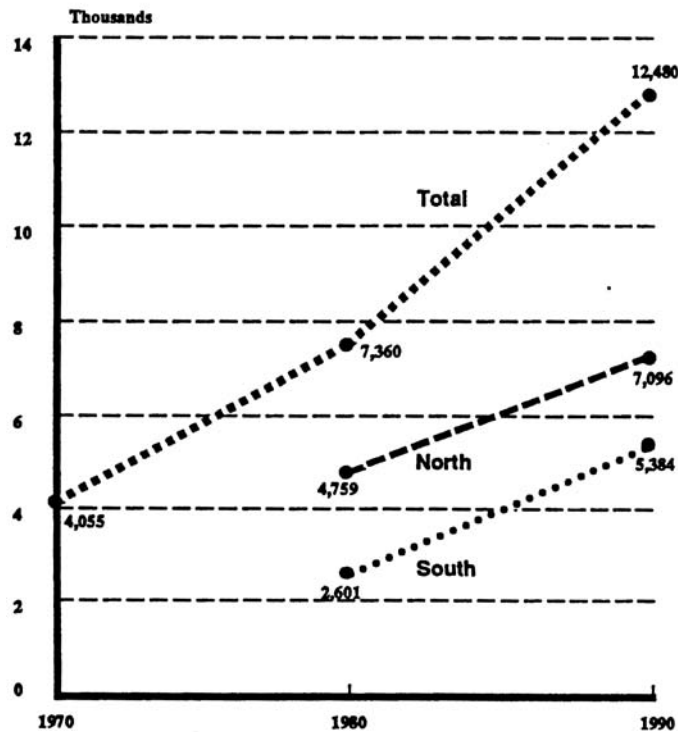


## DEMOGRAPHICS

The East Mountain Area population has shown dramatic growth through the last two decades, with a much higher growth rate than other areas of Bernalillo County. In 1970, the population in the East Mountain Area was 4,055. In 1980, the population had increased to 7,360, an 81.5 percent increase. By 1990, the population increased an additional 69.6 percent to 12,480 people representing a 207.8 percent change since 1970 (see Graph of US Census Data). It is estimated (based upon building permit data) that an additional 1,020 people have moved to the East Mountain Area since the 1990 Census, for a current population of 13,500. The same data indicate that approximately 1,000 people per year are moving to the area. The 1991 public survey conducted as part of this planning effort revealed that 66.8 percent of the survey respondents had moved to the East Mountain Area within the last 10 years.

The East Mountain Area covers 316 square miles with the population showing dispersal throughout the region. Because of the dispersed population and the large area included in this study, the overall population density is still quite low, approximately .06 people/acre in 1990. Even if the approximately 50 percent of the area that is publicly owned is removed from the potential population area, the density is still only .12 people/acre. The East Mountain Area is still sparsely populated overall, with less than 3 percent of the County's population on 23 percent of the County's total land. This is not to say that the area is not experiencing very strong growth pressure, because it is. There are some subdivisions, such as Sandia Knolls, where the population density approaches that of the metropolitan area. When the existing land ownership, platting, and density allowed by the current zoning is considered, an estimated potential saturation population of 126,500 has been calculated for the area (Southwest Land Research, Inc., 1990). This estimate indicates that growth in the population could potentially increase exponentially if water/wastewater concerns were addressed and no changes to the existing development codes occurred.

TABLE 2

POPULATION TRENDS  
EAST MOUNTAIN AREA

*Graph of U.S. Census Population  
Data, East Mountain Area*

The increase in population is significantly larger than any of the recent population projections anticipated (Socioeconomic Projections for Albuquerque, 1980-2000, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, UNM, July, 1989, and East Mountain Branch Library Neighborhood Study, Southwest Land Research, Inc., 1990), even though the same sources had overestimated other areas of the County (see Albuquerque Public Schools, Five-Year Enrollment Projections 1991-92/1995-96, August, 1991 for discussion of projections). Obviously, the growth in the East Mountain Area is not following trends established in Bernalillo County.

In 1980, 65 percent of the study area population lived north of I-40. That was predicted to decline slightly to 62 percent by 1990 (SWLR, 1990). In fact, only 57 percent of the population (7,096) were living north of I-40 in 1990, with the remaining 43 percent (5,384) living south of I-40. Both areas are showing strong growth with the area south of I-40 rapidly catching up to the north area in total population. The population south of I-40 increased 107 percent in the last decade versus a growth rate of 49 percent in the north.

In 1990, the number of persons per household was slightly larger in the East Mountain Area (2.72) than in Bernalillo County as a whole (2.55). The number of persons per household in the East Mountain Area has decreased since 1980 (2.9), which is consistent with national trends. The East Mountain Area can be characterized as a relatively young population, with a higher percentage of people under the age of 18 than Bernalillo County, and a lower percentage of people 65 or older than the County as a whole. There are slightly more men than women in the East Mountain Area (6,419 males and 6,041 females),

which is the opposite of the population breakdown by sex for Bernalillo County and the State of New Mexico overall where women outnumber men. Additional detail on the population characteristics is included in **TABLE 3**.

As mentioned earlier, published population projections from recent years have all underestimated the actual 1990 population figures for the East Mountain Area. The Socioeconomic Projections for Albuquerque, 1980-2000 projected a 2.2 percent annual growth rate for the area for a population of 12,843 in the year 2000 (only 363 more people than the 1990 census count of 12,480). The Albuquerque Public Schools are predicting even slower growth rates for the next decade (1 to 1.3 percent annually). These small percentages are probably accurate for the large base population of the metropolitan area, but do not pertain to the smaller base population of the East Mountain Area, where growth has a larger impact on percentage of change calculations.

**TABLE 3**  
**EAST MOUNTAIN AREA**  
**1990 CENSUS POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS**

	Total East Mountain Area	North of I-40	South of I-40	
<b>Total Population</b>	12,480	7,096	5,384	
<b>Male</b>	6,419	3,637	2,782	
<b>Female</b>	6,041	3,439	2,602	
<b>0-5 yrs.</b>	1,006	536	470	<b>% of Total Population Under the Age of 18</b>
<b>6-15 yrs.</b>	2,312	1,277	1,035	28% - North of I-40 in East Mountain Area
<b>16-24 yrs.</b>	882	472	410	30% - South of I-40 in East Mountain Area
<b>25-64 yrs.</b>	7,487	4,330	3,157	26% - Bernalillo County
<b>65+ yrs.</b>	793	481	312	29% - State of New Mexico
				<b>% of Total Population Over the Age of 65</b>
				7% - North of I-40 in East Mountain Area
				6% - South of I-40 in East Mountain Area
				10% - Bernalillo County
				10% - State of New Mexico

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

After review of the dramatic growth that has occurred in the East Mountain Area, the planning team has prepared three alternative population projections for low, medium, and high annual growth rates. These are much higher rates than could be applied to Albuquerque or Bernalillo County, but are typical of rapidly growing areas with small base populations, and are consistent with actual growth in the area. Previous decades have seen sustained annual growth rates between 7 and 10 percent in the East Mountain Area. While it is not expected that such rates can be sustained indefinitely (due to environmental constraints in the areas, and the overall sluggish economy of the Albuquerque metropolitan area), a rate significantly higher than the metro area is reasonable for the East Mountain Area.

An annual growth rate of 1.7 percent (low) would yield a total population of 14,722 people in the East Mountain Area in 2000 (an increase of 2,292 from 1990). An annual growth rate of 3.0 percent (medium) will yield a population of 16,770 in 2000, an increase of 4,290 from 1990. The high annual growth rate, 5.8 percent, yields a population of 21,930 people in 2000, or an increase of 9,450 people. The increase between 1980 and 1990 was 5,720 people (5.4 percent annual rate).

Most of the increase in population has been due to immigration from Albuquerque, and this trend is expected to continue so long as water availability/quality problems are resolved. The East Mountain Area is largely a bedroom community in that most of the residents rely on Albuquerque for employment and shopping. Currently, 997 jobs are available in the East Mountain Area with a working age population of over 8,000 (BBER, 1989). The number of jobs in the area is very low relative to the population of working age, so that most residents must commute out of the area for employment. A survey of East Mountain Area residents conducted in 1988 by the East Mountain Area Association found that over half the residents work in Albuquerque. This is consistent with data gathered through the 1991 survey completed as part of this plan.

The major employers in the area are the Albuquerque Public Schools, Sandia Peak Ski Company, Ideal Basic Industries, and State and County Government offices, although the US Forest Service also has a seasonal effect on the local area employment numbers (BBER, 1989). (See Employment Tables – **Tables 4 & 5**). The existing commuting character of the area is unlikely to change based upon the desires of area residents as measured in the 1991 survey, where 77.8 percent were opposed to new industry in the area, and 53.8 percent of the respondents were opposed to new employment opportunities in the area in general. The Development Trends section addresses the primarily residential character of the East Mountain Area in more detail.

There is little question that the area will continue to experience growth pressure from the City of Albuquerque as more and more people become willing to commute to work in exchange for the lower population density, fresh air, scenic mountain environment, and quiet of the East Mountain Area. Many of the East Mountain Area residents also commute (to a lesser degree) to Moriarty, Edgewood, and Santa Fe. The character of the area is already dramatically altered from what it was 20 years ago. There is very little evidence of active agricultural pursuits in the area, and low-density residential development continues to spread throughout the area. Except for the traditional settlements in the Carnue and Chilili land grant areas which maintain their way of life through restricted land ownership, the character of the villages have been altered somewhat by the influx of new residents and their interpretation of what the East Mountain Area lifestyle means.

The population of the area is rapidly changing and evolving, and new challenges must be met by existing residents in order to try to influence the patterns and types of new growth that will occur in the area.

***“Only the growth of a global appreciation for our common human past will wipe out assumptions that a site belongs to the person who temporarily owns the land above it.”***

***- Ellen Herscher  
“A Future in Ruin”, 1989***

TABLE 4

WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT FOR THE EAST MOUNTAIN AREA  
NORTH OF I-40  
1977, 1984, 1985 AND 1988

	Number				Percent of Total			
	1977	1984	1985	1988	1977	1984	1985	1988
Agriculture	NA	3	3	0	NA	0.9%	0.8%	0.0%
Construction	NA	60	40	77	NA	18.7	11.2	12.7
Manufacturing	NA	2	3	0	NA	0.6	0.8	0.0
Transportation & Utilities	NA	0	33	46	NA	0.0	9.2	7.6
Wholesale	NA	0	6	1	NA	0.0	1.7	0.2
Retail	NA	199	221	166	NA	62.0	61.7	27.5
FIRE	NA	22	11	29	NA	6.9	3.1	4.8
Services & Misc.	NA	29	33	237	NA	9.0	9.2	39.2
Government	NA	6	8	48	NA	1.9	2.2	7.9
TOTAL	NA	321	358	604	NA	100%	100%	100%

TABLE 5

WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT FOR THE EAST MOUNTAIN AREA  
SOUTH OF I-40  
1977, 1984, 1985 AND 1988

	Number				Percent of Total			
	1977	1984	1985	1988	1977	1984	1985	1988
Agriculture	NA	5	1	0	NA	1.5%	0.3%	0.0%
Construction	NA	32	49	52	NA	9.9%	13.7%	13.2%
Manufacturing	NA	159	162	135	NA	49.2%	45.3%	34.4%
Transportation & Utilities	NA	55	69	0	NA	17.0%	19.3%	0.0%
Wholesale	NA	5	14	0	NA	1.5%	3.9%	0.0%
Retail	NA	9	14	0	NA	2.8%	3.9%	7.4%
FIRE	NA	19	10	0	NA	5.9%	2.8%	0.0%
Services & Misc.	NA	19	10	59	NA	5.9%	2.8%	15.0%
Government	NA	20	29	118	NA	6.2%	8.1%	30.0%
TOTAL	NA	323	358	393	NA	100%	100%	100%

Sources: 1977, 1984 and 1985, "Demographic Projections, 1987," City of Albuquerque; 1988, New Mexico Department of Labor, City of Albuquerque, Planning Division and Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments.

NA -- Not Available